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WINDS OF CHANGE:
THE FUTURE OF THE 32D ARMY AIR DEFENSE COMMAND
IN U.S. ARMY EUROPE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEFFREY W. GAULT, AD

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THE FUTURE OF THE 32D ARMY AIR DEFENSE COMMAND
IN U.S. ARMY EUROPE

An Individual Study Project

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	1
Events in Europe	1
Impact on US Forces in Europe	2
32d Army Air Defense Command	3
II. REQUIREMENTS FOR US FORCES IN EUROPE	5
The Challenge Ahead	5
Warsaw Pact Force Changes in Europe	5
U.S. Army Force Reductions	6
The Need for US Forces	8
III. THE FUTURE OF 32D AADCOM	14
Precedents	14
The OSD View	16
The OSD Fallacy	17
Increased Air Defense Requirements	20
New Threats	24
The Future	26
IV. SUMMARY	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	30

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WINDS OF CHANGE:
THE FUTURE OF THE 32ND ARMY AIR DEFENSE COMMAND
-- IN U.S. ARMY EUROPE

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of the 32d Army Air Defense Command (32d AADCOM) in US Army Europe (USAREUR) as we move toward the turn of the century. This will involve an overview of the tumultuous changes which are currently taking place in Europe, an examination of possible force reduction trends in USAREUR and in NATO, an evaluation of the requirements for future theater level U.S. air defense forces, and a discussion of the status and roles of the 32d AADCOM as we approach the year 2000.

EVENTS IN EUROPE

On 9 November 1989, the East German government opened the Berlin Wall, marking one of the most dramatic watershed events of the postwar era and altering the course of future East-West relations in Europe. In recent weeks, the governments of every Warsaw Pact satellite have fallen and been replaced by largely non-communist governments seeking to loosen ties with Moscow and introduce democracy. The once formidable Warsaw Pact has begun to disintegrate, as Eastern European members have reduced their own forces and called for withdrawals of

Soviet troops on their soil. The introduction of Mikhail Gorbachev's "new political thinking" and the uncovering of rampant Soviet economic and ethnic problems have served to further lessen East-West tensions and portend continuing major changes within both NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

IMPACT ON U.S. FORCES IN EUROPE

These dramatic events unfolding in Europe have contributed measurably to an erosion of the strong defense consensus which supported President Ronald Reagan's military build-up of the early 1980s. In concert with a ponderous budget deficit and a number of pressing domestic issues, the evolving political and military landscape in Europe has led to pressing demands for major cuts in the U.S. defense budget. Congress has begun to seek major budget reductions, the military services are well underway with plans to slash forces and programs, and virtually every sector of American society is discussing the possibility of a "peace dividend" resulting from major defense budget reductions. Frequent calls are being made for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe, and many observers have proclaimed that NATO has outlived its purpose.¹

In light of these events, the future of U.S. forces in NATO is uncertain. This is particularly the case for the U.S. Army forces as the huge Soviet and Warsaw Pact tank armies

draw down. Major reductions in U.S. Army Europe appear inevitable. In May, 1989, President George Bush proposed a 25,000-man cut in U.S. forces in Europe; on 31 January, he further proposed mutual U.S. and Soviet cuts to 195,000 troops in Central Europe. The dizzying pace of talks on reductions in Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and unilateral withdrawals indicates that more substantial reductions will soon follow.

32d Army Air Defense Command

USAREUR consists of approximately 200,000 soldiers assigned primarily to two corps (V and VII) and a number of major subordinate functional commands. One of these subordinate commands is the 32d AADC, which is responsible for the ground based air defense of West Germany in the USAREUR sector. Due in part to the very high costs involved in the sophisticated technology of modern air defense weapons systems, the 32d AADC is one of the units under study for possible reductions. Ironically, 32d AADC units are in the midst of one of the most substantial modernization programs of the command's history; yet, like many of the units now in Europe, the 32d AADC has an uncertain future. This paper seeks to answer the question of what that future should be.

ENDNOTES

1. DeVallon Bolles, "NATO's Job is Over; It's Time to Go Home," Defense News, 20 November 1989, p. 31, and Philip Revzin, "NATO's New Enemy: Peace in Europe," Wall Street Journal, 8 March 1990, p. A-10.

CHAPTER II
-REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. FORCES IN EUROPE
THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

For over forty years, vast armies of the East and West have warily faced one another across the Iron Curtain in Europe. The impressive size and combat potential of Warsaw Pact forces proved comfortable and convenient for military strategists and national leaders in justifying NATO defense budgets and force levels. The daunting challenge which now faces these defense planners and national leaders is how to maintain a viable and appropriate defense in a period of rapid change and in an uncertain political landscape. As tensions relax and forces draw down, they must determine the proper levels of required forces and craft strategies to deal with these dramatic changes. For NATO members, and particularly the United States, this task is made more difficult by the need to resolve these issues within the context of a unified NATO effort in which the U.S. continues to play a key role.

Warsaw Pact Force Changes in Europe

Soviet President Gorbachev's recognition of the Soviet Union's severe economic problems and his nation's need to divert resources from the military sector led to his December, 1988, proposal to reduce unilaterally Soviet forces. He

stated that, by 1991, the Soviets would cut their armed forces by 500,000 men and withdraw six divisions from Eastern Europe while reorganizing their forces to a clearly defensive structure.¹ This proposal, in concert with the renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the downfall of communist governments in Eastern Europe, has led to large scale changes in the military make up of the Warsaw Pact. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland have all announced reductions in their defenses and a reorientation of forces to a national defense role. In addition, these countries have called for the withdrawal of Soviet forces, and timetables have been set in the case of both Hungary and Czechoslovakia.² The East German Army, once numbering in excess of 170,000 and rated as the second most formidable force in the Warsaw Pact, is rapidly disintegrating and now has less than 90,000 men.³ The two remaining members of the Warsaw Pact, Bulgaria and Rumania, have experienced less change in their armed forces, but unstable leadership and internal strife have greatly diminished their reliability.

U.S. Army Force Reductions

For the past 40 years, the raison d'être of the U.S. Army has been to deter or respond to a major conflict in Europe. The widely perceived abatement in threat from the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact has reduced this mission. Consequently, the

Army faces major force cuts both in forward deployed USAREUR units and in U.S. based units earmarked for reinforcement of Europe. By 1994, the Army plans to eliminate three active divisions and reduce its rolls by 130,000 soldiers. Depending upon the outcome of CFE negotiations, two divisions and a corps headquarters would be withdrawn from Europe.⁴ Commensurate reductions in support units and corps or higher echelon combat units such as 32d AADCOR would be required to meet USAREUR's share of the 195,000 ceiling.⁵

It must be remembered, however, that these reductions represent U.S. Army plans, and do not reflect those changes which may be imposed externally -- either by NATO or by the U.S. leadership. Key members of Congress, for example, have made it clear that the Army's force reduction plans fall far short of the magnitude desired by Congress and the American public.⁶ It is widely expected that the defense budget will be reduced greatly over the next five to ten years. The combination of easing tensions in Europe and increased defense attention to the Third World means that the Army will bear the brunt of these overall budget reductions. U.S. strategy is already being reoriented from one of forward defense to one of forward presence; and, as overall force levels are decreased, pressures will mount to eliminate overseas units instead of U.S. based units. Indeed, Defense Secretary

Richard Cheney's recent proposal to close several installations in the U.S. has already sparked heated debate on this issue. It therefore appears that many within government might seek to limit U.S. forces in Central Europe to a number significantly less than 195,000. The interplay of East-West negotiations and the emerging desires of the Germans will also be crucial in determining USAREUR's future and ultimate size, as continuing rapprochement will undoubtedly lessen the Germans' willingness to retain foreign troops on their soil.

The Need for U.S. Forces

Despite the pressures for budget savings and reductions in the perceived Soviet threat, there is a distinct need for continued U.S. Army ground presence through the turn of the century. At this juncture, the greatest danger for NATO lies in the uncertainty of the future. The sweeping events of the past months have occurred with such speed that no one predicted them; the snowball effects of Gorbachev's "new political thinking" have reached the point that they are well beyond the control or plans of any leader, particularly Gorbachev. The possibility of a conservative reaction, overthrow or assassination of Gorbachev, and harsh crackdown against reforms dictates that the U.S. and NATO proceed

cautiously with any force drawdowns. Ethnic conflicts or other internal challenges such as the Lithuanian drive for independence could quickly spill beyond Soviet borders and impact upon NATO. Furthermore, the sheer size of Soviet forces and their nuclear arsenal mandates that the U.S. retain a strong presence for the foreseeable future. Should the U.S. make significant force withdrawals, the realities of the American political process would undoubtedly preclude their timely reintroduction into Europe in time of crisis. This would be particularly true if the bulk of European reinforcement forces were to be drawn from the reserves, as currently under consideration. Another often mentioned concern is the geographic advantage that the U.S.S.R. enjoys in Europe. Withdrawn Soviet forces have approximately one thousand miles to travel overland in order to threaten NATO, while U.S. forces must be transported several thousands of miles over tenuous air and sea lines of communication in order to be positioned for conflict. This geographic advantage is even more significant for combat aircraft, where combat flying radii and rapid flight times might enable some Soviet aircraft to attack NATO assets on very short notice from Soviet controlled territories.

The movement toward German reunification will undoubtedly establish further requirements for the continued presence of

U.S. forces in Europe. Although the Soviets would prefer a reunited Germany to remain neutral, West German and NATO leaders have insisted that a reunited Germany remain a member of NATO. President Bush has argued that the continued presence of U.S. forces serves as a stabilizing factor in Central Europe, and that a continued German participation in NATO is in the best interests of both East and West.⁷ The most viable proposals for reunification stipulate that former East German territory would not be occupied by U.S. or NATO troops in deference to Soviet concerns. Additionally, as a term of any unification agreement, the Soviets might very possibly be permitted to leave a substantial portion of their forces in East German territory for an extended period. U.S. forces should not be withdrawn or substantially reduced as long as Soviet troops remain in East German territory.

The continued existence of some form of the Warsaw Pact will further bolster the need for a U.S. troop presence in Europe. Despite withdrawals of Soviet troops and the pronouncements of many observers that the Warsaw Pact is dead, the Pact will continue to exist and to play a role in Soviet security strategy through the next decade. East Germany will no longer be a member, and one or two other nations might withdraw, but several member states will most probably desire to retain the benefits of a mutual security alliance with the Soviet Union.⁸

Thus, there are compelling reasons for U.S. forces to remain in Europe in the mid term. This period will be marked by dramatic change in the military make-up of NATO, as the reduced Soviet and Warsaw Pact threat will undoubtedly lead to less cohesion within the alliance. Increased warning times and parity of forces will require NATO to reassess its basic strategy and make major changes in its force structure. Both the U.S. and the rest of NATO will come to rely more heavily on reserves and smaller, more professional forces. All of these factors will have an impact on air defense requirements and must be considered when evaluating the future role of the 32d AADCOM.

ENDNOTES

1. Specific reductions were announced as follows.
By 1991 the U.S.S.R. would:
 - *Reduce the size of its armed forces by 500,000 men;
 - *Withdraw and disband six tank divisions from East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary;
 - *Withdraw assault landing and crossing troops and units with equipment from the same countries;
 - *Reduce Soviet forces in these countries by 50,000 men and 5,000 tanks (later increased to 5,300 tanks and to include Poland);
 - *Reduce Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and Western Soviet Union by 10,000 tanks, 8,500 artillery systems, and 800 combat aircraft;
 - *Reorganize Soviet forces remaining in Eastern Europe to a clearly defensive structure.U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Committee Delegation to West Berlin, East Germany and the Soviet Union, Status of the Soviet Union's Unilateral Force Reductions and Restructuring of its Forces, p. 3.
2. David Remnick, "Moscow, Prague in Pullout Pact," Washington Post, 27 February 1990, p. A-12, and Glenn Frankel, "East Europeans Seek Full Pullout of Soviet Troops," Washington Post, 18 January 1990, p. A-12.
3. LTC Jeffrey McCausland, "East German Army - Spearpoint or Weakness," Military Review, February, 1990, p. 13, and "East German Weakness," Wall Street Journal, 1 March 1990, p. A12.
4. Tom Donnelly, "The Big Chop: 130,000 from Active Duty," Army Times, December 11, 1989, p. 3.
5. President Bush's January 1990 proposal was that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. reduce their forces in Central Europe to a total of 195,000. U.S. Air Force personnel in Germany number approximately 40,000, compared to approximately 200,000 Army personnel, for a one-to-five ratio. It could therefore be assumed that Air Force personnel would make up an appropriate percentage of any subsequent reduced force level. See General Accounting Office, Military Presence: U.S. Personnel in NATO Europe, pp. 20-21.
6. For example, see Rick Maze, "Showdown on Capital Hill," Army Times, 19 March 1990, p. 14.
7. Gerald F. Geib and Walter Mossberg, "Bush Tells Allies American Troops Will Stay in Europe," Wall Street Journal, 5 December 1989, P. A-19.

8. Poland, for example, with her concerns over the German-Polish border and over German militarism will most probably remain allied with the Soviets and may even permit continued presence of Soviet troops on her soil. See Blane Harden, "Pole Says Soviet Units Should Stay," Washington Post, 22 February 1990, p. A-1.

CHAPTER III

THE FUTURE OF 32D AADCOM

As is the case for all major USAREUR units, 32d AADCOM's status is under study in the halls of the Pentagon. In anticipation of a CFE agreement and near term USAREUR force structure cuts approaching possibly 40 percent, the future of the AADCOM would seem to be in doubt. This chapter will outline current arguments for reducing 32d AADCOM, explain the shortcomings of these positions, and provide the rationale behind strong continued theater level air defense forces in USAREUR.

PRECEDENTS

A number of precedents have been established whereby air defense forces have been eliminated or cut as a cost saving measure during times of austerity. For example, despite the existence of a not insignificant Soviet/Cuban air fleet in Cuba, the 31st ADA Brigade in Miami/Key West was eliminated in the late 1970s as a part of the continuing post-Vietnam drawdowns and reduced defense budgets of the Carter years. A more telling and appropriate example was the inactivation in 1980 of the 38th ADA Brigade in Korea, with the closure of some units and the wholesale transfer of

equipment and missions to the South Koreans. This reorganization was a response to President Carter's efforts to reduce the U.S. presence in that country.

Wide ranging debate over administration plans to withdraw U.S. ground forces led to intense scrutiny and publicity over the substantial threat, both land and air, posed by the North Koreans. This potential threat and the levels of tension in the area led to reassessment of this decision; however, the withdrawal of air defense forces was accomplished.

These examples reflect a more basic tendency on the part of the Army: to inadequately fund air defense programs. This traditional weak support at Department of the Army level has been recognized within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), as shown by periodic OSD intervention to restore or adequately fund air defense programs.¹ This situation becomes critical with regard to possible force cuts in light of the high costs and potential risks of the Forward Army Air Defense System (FAADS), which the Army is currently developing. Besides being extremely expensive, this ambitious program simultaneously to develop and field five separate systems represents a high-risk technology, which always means a significant chance of failure. On the heels of the Sergeant York air defense system debacle, the FAADS program and the entire Air Defense Artillery Branch are in the spotlight and

could be vulnerable to significant cutbacks and funding reductions.² In addition, heavy air defense forces such as the units which predominate in 32d AADCOM are also quite susceptible to cuts as the Army suffers painful reductions across the board. The PATRIOT system, for example, is one of the most costly Army systems ever fielded, with a pricetag in excess of \$12 billion. In the eyes of many officers, this system has absorbed an inordinate portion of the Army's budget during a period of sustained cuts in defense spending.

The OSD View

Ironically, one of the greatest direct threats to the future of 32d AADCOM comes from OSD. In a recent study, Beyond Burden Sharing: A New Policy Approach, OSD recommended the closure of 32d AADCOM as a means more equitably to distribute costs and military burdens within NATO. This study advocates transferring the air defense mission of 32d AADCOM to the West German Bundeswehr -- specifically, to the German territorial forces of the German Territorial Southern Command (GTSC) -- to "operate as the U.S. Air National Guard does in North American air defense."³ According to the authors, such a transfer of mission would save 22,500 spaces for USAREUR while eliminating all 32d AADCOM units and a substantial number of soldiers dedicated to 32d support roles. Equipment

could be transferred to the GTSC, with the US-FRG PATRIOT agreement of 1985 serving as precedent for such an action.⁴ In addition, the authors argue that reduced readiness states commensurate with reserve units would allow the Germans to achieve a significant economy of forces by manning these new units at a level 60 percent lower than currently. Further U.S. space savings of 5,000 soldiers could also be achieved in the CONUS rotation base by eliminating inefficiencies and redundancies which exist solely to support disproportionate overseas requirements for air defense manpower. The authors also contend that German forces would enjoy significant recruiting advantages by focusing on local youth to man these units, thus helping to alleviate Bundeswehr recruiting problems.⁵ The underlying basis for the authors' proposal lies in role specialization: by transferring the responsibility for ground-based air defense to the FRG, significant savings and increases in efficiency could be achieved, thereby improving readiness and enhancing deterrence. Such specialization would then free U.S. forces to concentrate on other missions in a more focused and efficient manner.

The OSD Fallacy

Attractive as they may be to OSD planners, these

arguments are highly specious and politically unrealistic. The very heart of NATO is the willingness of all member nations to stand together and contribute forces to the common defense. Only through the active participation of all member nations can the alliance reflect the strength of unity and the warning that any aggression will inevitably involve all member nations. The unwillingness of any single nation to participate in any aspect of the common defense weakens this cohesion which is the true strength of NATO. The importance of this unity in the face of a common threat far outweighs any efficiencies or economy which might be obtained through specialization. Air defense forces, to include all units of 32 AADCOM, are the only NATO forces which are now fully integrated into a NATO command structure. Under the NATO Integrated Air Defense System these units play a particularly significant operational, deterrent, and symbolic role within NATO.

In addition to the damage which such a scheme could do to NATO cohesion, there is absolutely no reason to imagine that the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) would find it acceptable. The Bundeswehr is encountering significant problems in manning its current force, and these problems will increase as available numbers of military eligible youth fall. In recognition of the reduced threat from the Warsaw Pact and

these manpower difficulties, the FRG government has recently announced a 15 percent cutback in its force structure. There is therefore little reason to assume that the West Germans would be willing to take on the increased manpower and budget requirements of air defense for the U.S. sector of central Europe.⁶ The authors' arguments citing the recruiting advantages of such a localized force are simply wrong: all Bundeswehr units are currently recruited from local areas, already improving retention and ties with the local population.

Finally, the question of role specialization is an issue which is particularly distasteful to Europeans. This concept is most frequently advocated by Americans seeking to reduce the NATO defense burden (particularly the manpower burden) at the expense of the Europeans through the introduction of new technologies. To be effective, such specialization must be accepted and implemented by all nations involved. Notwithstanding the arguments for or against this concept, there is very little likelihood that it would be acceptable to the Federal Republic or to NATO.

The OSD plan would have significant disadvantages for the U.S. Army as well. First, the U.S. would be required to simply write off an investment of over \$12 billion for air defense equipment currently in the force. Second, USAREUR

would be forced to rely on German forces for air defense of its critical assets, increasing risk and decreasing effectiveness in the U.S. sector. This situation would be exacerbated by the losses in data exchange capabilities between high-altitude and divisional short range air defense (SHORAD) weapons in the sector. Third, this plan would virtually eliminate ground based air defense capabilities in the U.S. military -- particularly with the added cutbacks in CONUS air defense forces. Finally, advantages such as interoperability among Army forces, and transfer of intelligence (particularly from national means) between air and ground forces would be hampered.

Increased Air Defense Requirements

As forces draw down, the need for ground-based air defense forces will increase. With the transition from a forward defense to a forward presence, the U.S. will be forced to emphasize its reinforcing role and thus become far more reliant upon POMCUS sites, airbases, ports, staging areas and lines of communications. Such areas would become prime targets for attacking Soviet forces, using aircraft, tactical ballistic missiles (TBMs), and other air delivered weapons. Air defense units would be absolutely essential to defend such assets, should a conflict occur subsequent to major force withdrawals.

As negotiations over the size and structure of remaining USAREUR forces progress, retention of 33d AADCOM units presents a particularly attractive alternative to force planners and NATO political leaders. In addition to facilitating reintroduction of reinforcements and making a substantial contribution to any remaining U.S. ground forces in Europe, these forces are clearly recognized as being purely defensive in nature. They would therefore be more acceptable to the host Germans for long term retention on German soil. More importantly, these forces pose a significantly lesser threat to the Soviets, and would therefore be more likely to facilitate Soviet agreement to asymmetrical reductions and a continued U.S. presence in Europe.

The unilateral Soviet force cutbacks and additional CFE reductions being presently negotiated underscore additional reasons for the increased need for air defense systems. Under the proposed CFE agreement, the Warsaw Pact nations would make reductions of 37,000 tanks and 29,000 artillery tubes, down to equal ceilings of 20,000 and 16,500 respectively, resulting in a parity of ground forces.¹ As ground units are reduced and defenses become thinner, mobility will become an increasingly more important factor for NATO forces. Robust air defenses are necessary to facilitate this mobility and to protect ground units as they move across the battlefield.

Furthermore, under conditions of parity of ground forces, an aggressor must be able to mass quickly at the point of attack in order to achieve success. Due to their inherent speed and flexibility, aircraft will become a primary means for the Soviets to achieve this mass in any future war plans. As a consequence, NATO forces must have adequate air defenses to counter the high force ratios of aircraft which will be committed in an attack.

Although agreement on reductions in ground troops and weapons appears likely, the chances of attaining parity in air forces are far less assured, for several reasons. First, although numbers and categories of aircraft differ, the Warsaw Pact currently enjoys a rough 2 to 1 advantage in combat aircraft.⁸ NATO has proposed equal CFE ceilings of 5,700 planes, but the Soviets have demanded that an additional 1000 Soviet air defense interceptors and 5,700 Soviet training aircraft be excluded from the agreement.⁹ Thus, instead of eliminating more than 8,000 aircraft as under the U.S. proposal, Warsaw Pact nations might actually be required to cut a far lesser number. NATO acquiescence on this issue would leave the Soviet Bloc with significantly higher numbers of aircraft in the Atlantic to the Urals Region. Second, in the event of agreement, it is most likely that the bulk of the aircraft eliminated would be removed from the air forces of

the Warsaw Pact allies, and not from the Soviet Air Force. Generally,-- the air forces of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact nations "contain mostly older-generation Soviet fighters that are inferior to both Soviet and NATO aircraft."¹⁰ Furthermore, these aircraft primarily function in the homeland defense and air support roles, and many will undoubtedly be eliminated as a part of independent national force reductions. The Soviets, by contrast, have pursued an aggressive program of airfleet modernization and upgrades, with drastic improvements in aircraft payload, range, and sophistication attained in recent years.¹¹ It is logical to assume, therefore, that any CFE reductions would result in the removal of first line aircraft from NATO air forces, and inferior, older generation aircraft from Warsaw Pact air forces, leaving the high quality Soviet aircraft relatively untouched. Third, disagreements over the roles and types of aircraft as outlined above make it unlikely that an aircraft agreement will be reached as a part of any initial CFE treaty.¹² It is quite possible that the Soviets will attempt to delay the conclusion of a CFE agreement until the ultimate status of the two German states is acceptably resolved. Yet the sheer magnitude of proposed Soviet and Warsaw Pact reductions makes it imperative that the West press for quick agreement - in order to capture these mutual reductions before Western legislatures impose unilateral cuts

to forces. A prolonged debate over aircraft would therefore not be in the best interest of NATO. Soviet intransigence on this issue clearly reflects the importance of the air arm to overall Soviet combined arms operations and the necessity for the Soviets to retain a degree of advantage in this area. The failure to attain any CFE aircraft cutbacks would leave the existing overwhelming Soviet air advantage in place.

One final factor underscores the importance of NATO air defenses: the strength and sophistication of the Soviet ground based air defense network. Since the CFE talks do not address surface-to-air missiles or air defense forces, the Soviets will retain their very significant numerical advantage in this area following any reductions.¹³ This advantage, along with the high quality and numerical superiority of Soviet air forces, will weigh heavily in the future balance of forces. Without continued strong counterbalancing air defenses in NATO, this air differential will allow the Soviets to continue to enjoy significant overall force level advantages in the future.

New Threats

As we move toward the turn of the century, a number of new and evolving threats must be countered. The growing Soviet TBM threat was reduced but far from solved with the

Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. This treaty left intact the lethal and growing Soviet arsenal of TBMs with a range of less than 500 kilometers, and an aggressive Soviet program to improve the reliability and accuracy of such TBMs virtually leaves all of USAREUR at continued risk. Furthermore, increases in accuracy permit the Soviets to strike airbases, command posts, and other critical assets with purely conventional means, placing our nuclear response forces in jeopardy. This dramatic, ongoing modernization program has given the Warsaw Pact a 16 to 1 advantage in tactical ballistic missiles over NATO.¹⁴ This advantage can only be countered by ground based air defense systems.

In addition to the Soviets, a growing number of other non-NATO or Warsaw Pact nations are acquiring TBM technology with increasing ranges, accuracy and payloads. The Iran-Iraq war highlighted the lethality and threat of such weapons, particularly when armed with chemical munitions. According to various estimates, over 20 nations currently have TBMs, and by the year 2000, this number may increase significantly.¹⁵ It is quite possible that a number of Middle East or Mediterranean nations will possess the ability to strike Central Europe with TBMs, in the mid term. As terrorist and political organizations such as the PLO have demonstrated the ability to acquire and employ sophisticated and expensive

weaponry, the need for defenses against these weapons will grow.

The Future

Over the next ten years asymmetrical reduction in the large mechanized and tank armies of the East and West will lead to a state of approximate parity in Europe. Yet, as the threat dissipates, tensions relax, and forces are reduced, the need for robust air defense forces will remain. For, unlike the ground threat, the air threat to NATO -- which includes aircraft, TBMs, and advanced air delivered weapons -- will remain decidedly in the Soviets' favor. These are the forces which are the least hampered in their effectiveness by pullbacks into the Soviet Union and are the forces which have the ability to strike most deeply and most quickly into NATO territory. Thus, this air advantage will provide increased leverage to the Soviets in a post-CFE Europe; and the air threat will increase in importance to both the Soviets and to NATO. It is therefore imperative that the air defense forces of the 32d AADCOM remain in Europe as long as the U.S. maintains a presence in NATO.

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CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

As the Army reduces by approximately one-third over the course of the next 5 years and restructures its forces, the 32d AADCOM will also face major changes. Through the coming decade, USAREUR troops undoubtedly will be withdrawn in conjunction with CFE negotiated reductions and defense cuts. As Germany moves rapidly toward reunification, negotiations with the U.S.S.R. will most likely eventually lead to the ultimate total withdrawal of both Soviet and NATO foreign troops from German soil. This process could take well over 10 years, however, and could be halted by the renewal of tensions or changes in Soviet policy or leadership. Should this occur, and U.S. forces be required to maintain a long term significant presence in Europe, the 32d AADCOM must remain as a key part of that contingent. Without adequate air defense to protect critical assets, ports, and equipment, the ability of the U.S. adequately and rapidly to reinforce NATO comes into serious question.

With future increases in the range and accuracy of air-delivered weapons systems, the need for an active air defense capability will remain despite relaxed tensions with the Soviet Union and troop withdrawals. The units of 32d AADCOM must therefore continue to receive new air defense

capabilities and maintain the flexibility to respond to a wide array of evolving threats. As long as U.S. forces remain in Europe, the 32d AADC0M must remain as a part of those forces.

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